DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 473 926 PS 031 065

TITLE	Every Child, Every School: Success from the Start. Special Report.
INSTITUTION	Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, Harrisburg.
SPONS AGENCY	Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore, MD.; Howard Heinz Endowment, Pittsburgh, PA.; Grable Foundation, Pittsburgh, PA.
PUB DATE	2003-03-00
NOTE	14p.
AVAILABLE FROM	Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children, 20 N. Market Square, Suite 300, Harrisburg, PA 17101-1632. Tel: 800-257-2030 (Toll Free); Tel: 717-236-5680; Fax: 717-236-7745; e-mail: info@papartnerships.org; Web site: http://www.papartnerships.org. For full text: http://www.papartnerships.org/ everychildeveryschool.pdf.
PUB TYPE	Reports - Descriptive (141)
EDRS PRICE	EDRS Price MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS	Academic Achievement; Access to Education; Class Size; *Educational Finance; Equal Education; Full Day Half Day Schedules; Kindergarten; *Preschool Education; *Primary Education; *Public Policy; *School Readiness; *Young Children
IDENTIFIERS	*Pennsylvania

ABSTRACT

Noting that Pennsylvania's current support of policies to promote school success for all children offers an opportunity to assess how well the state serves its children, identifies gaps in services, and enacts effective public policies to meet children's needs, this special Kids Count report describes effective practices to help Pennsylvania achieve the goal of school success for every child. The report begins with a discussion of the connection between school district concentrations of low-income children and academic achievement levels, and asserts that education finance reform that restores equity and adequacy to education funding is critical to the success of early education programs. The report then presents Pennsylvania projections regarding student achievement, noting that students scoring lowest on state examinations are the students who gain the most from quality prekindergarten programs, full-day kindergarten programs, and smaller classes in the early grades. The report continues with a presentation of effective practices and current Pennsylvania policies and practices related to prekindergarten programs, full-day kindergarten programs, and small class sizes. The report concludes with policy recommendations for education finance reform, universal prekindergarten phased in over several years, adoption of new funding formulas to incorporate full-day kindergarten, assistance for high-poverty districts in implementing small class sizes for the early grades, and increased state shares for school construction costs. The report's appendix details data sources and data analysis procedures. (Contains 50 notes.) (KB)

Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made
from the original document.

ED 473 926

Every Child, Every School: Success from the Start. Special Report.

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

March 2003

PS031065

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

☒ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE AND DISSEMINATE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Martha C. Bergsten

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

Every Child, Every School: Success from the Start

March 2003

Special Report

Policy Pathways to Assure Educational Achievement

Reforms offer new opportunities

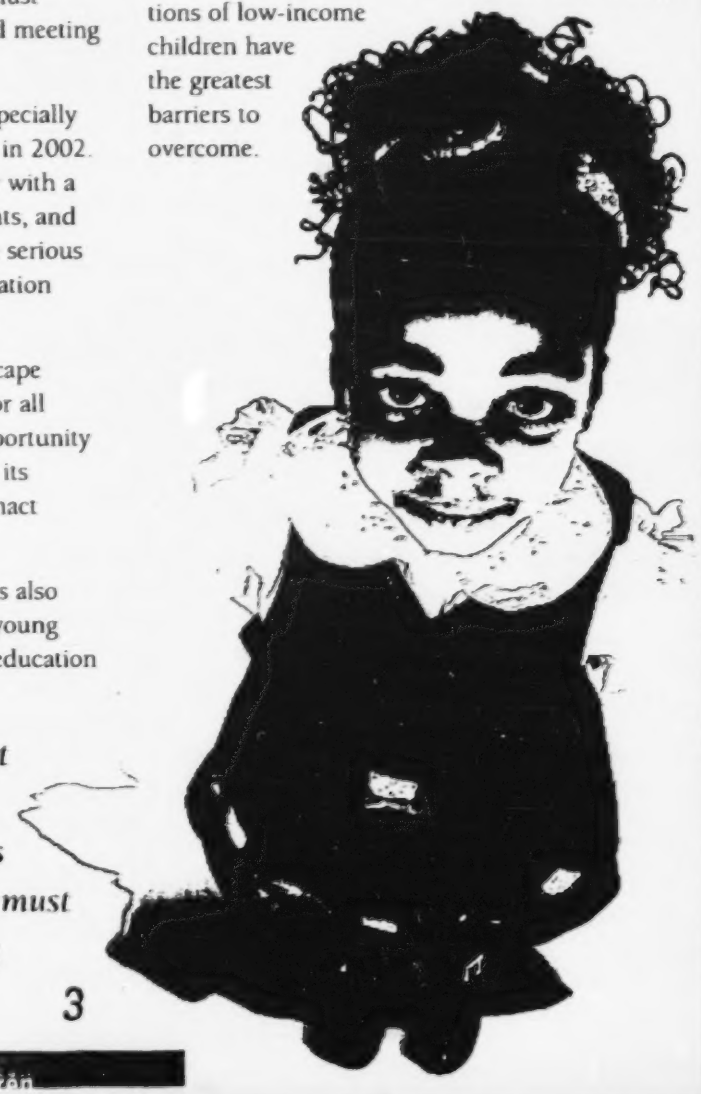
Children are the future of Pennsylvania, and their success relies largely on the quality of their education.

In the past year, federal education policy has undergone its most significant change since at least 1965. Federal law now requires all states, all school districts, and all schools to ensure that every child is proficient in reading, writing, math, and science within 12 years. And every state, every district, and every school must show steady progress every year toward meeting that objective.

The educational needs of children – especially young children – also came to the fore in 2002. Pennsylvanians elected a new governor with a detailed array of education commitments, and the General Assembly engaged in more serious consideration of improved public education funding than it had in recent memory.

So, Pennsylvania's 2003 political landscape supports policies to promote success for all children. This is an unprecedented opportunity to assess how well Pennsylvania serves its children, to identify the gaps, and to enact effective policies to meet real needs.

These political and policy opportunities also reflect recent scientific findings about young children's development. While formal education traditionally begins in kindergarten or first grade, brain development is most rapid long before that. Some children enter school prepared for success, while others do not. Young children who have been exposed to books and toys and music, who have been read to and acquired a large spoken vocabulary are more successful in school than those without. And those advantages are related to family income. Schools serving the highest concentrations of low-income children have the greatest barriers to overcome.



*Pennsylvania's goal must be at least as bold as the federal government's – **school success for every child.** Pennsylvania must achieve that goal by investing wisely in effective policies.*

PS031065

The Goal *– Pennsylvania's goal must be at least as bold as the federal government's –* ***school success for every child.*** *Pennsylvania must achieve that goal by investing wisely in effective policies.*

State test results make clear that school districts with high concentrations of low-income children tend to have lower achievement than districts with fewer low-income students. But almost every district has some students who are not achieving well enough. That is why Pennsylvania needs a more equitable system of school finance – to assure every child in every district a fair chance to succeed. At the same time, some children need a strong start to overcome the disadvantages they bring to school in the first place, so the state should design policies that target communities with high proportions of them.

Three programs, implemented effectively and in a continuum, can ensure even the least advantaged 4-year-old a chance to catch up and succeed in school by age 8:

- High-quality prekindergarten: Pennsylvania should phase in universal prekindergarten for 4-year-olds, provided in a variety of settings to fit parents' needs and encourage community planning. To emphasize prekindergarten's educational aspects, the state Department of Education should have oversight, and local school districts should administer services.
- Full-day, developmentally appropriate kindergarten: The state should fund full-day kindergarten by including it in an overhaul of the basic school funding formula.
- Small class sizes in the early grades: To promote better report cards and higher test scores, even as students reach later grades, the state should help high-poverty districts achieve average class sizes of 17 students in kindergarten through third grade.

Education finance reform that restores equity and adequacy to education funding is a critical overlay to assure the success of the early learning continuum, and policymakers should evaluate all school finance reform proposals for how well they enable educators to implement strategies for children's success from the start. Policymakers should also assure that schools can meet the facilities needs inherent in providing pre-K, full-day kindergarten, and smaller classes.

Pennsylvania Projections: Effective Implementation

Student Achievement in Pennsylvania

Pennsylvania defines "proficiency" on the state's PSSA exams as "satisfactory academic performance indicating a solid understanding and adequate display of the skills included in Pennsylvania's Academic Standards."[1] Achieving this level of proficiency is the 12-year target for all students under the federal No Child Left Behind Act. On the state's 2002 tests, 43 percent of all fifth graders failed to achieve this benchmark in reading, and 47 percent in mathematics.[2]

Students facing the greatest challenges have the farthest to go. The state's 50 districts with the highest percentage of students eligible for subsidized school lunches showed median scaled scores – the overall summary grades that allow for PSSA comparisons among districts – of only 1265 in reading in 2002, compared to the state median of 1340, and 1270 in math, compared to the state median of 1330.[3] As groups, African-American, Hispanic, low-income, and limited-English-proficient students scored significantly below the state median on PSSA exams.[4]

If Pennsylvania is to meet its No Child Left Behind goals on time, it should focus on those with the farthest to go. Those scoring lowest on state exams – low-income, minority, and limited-English-proficient students – are the students who gain the most from quality prekindergarten programs, full-day kindergarten, and smaller classes in the early grades. And they are heavily concentrated in districts with large proportions of low-income students.[5] The 50 districts with the highest concentrations of children eligible for free or reduced-price lunch comprise only 10 percent of the state's total districts but have:

- 23 percent of the state's students.
- 76 percent of African-American students.
- 65 percent of Hispanic students.
- 62 percent of limited-English-proficient students.

Prekindergarten: Effective Practices

A child's brain develops most rapidly in the years before formal schooling begins.[6] And that brain development is enhanced by sensitive care, quality education, and stimulating environments.[7] But not every young child experiences these enhancements. In fact, low-income children enter school with only half the vocabulary of middle-class children.[8] Many low-income children live with parents who themselves are not well-educated, and they have less access to quality preschool experiences than their more affluent peers.[9] Quality prekindergarten programs can help level the playing field:

- Children in Pennsylvania's Head Start programs make significant gains in listening and understanding, speaking and communicating, knowledge and appreciation of books, understanding sound-letter relationships, knowing letters and numbers, self-concept, self-control, and cooperation – all key predictors of school success.[10]
- Children in Allegheny County's Early Childhood Initiative for at-risk preschoolers entered school with the most critical "building block" skills for school success, based on Pennsylvania academic standards. They performed at average or above-average on standardized tests in kindergarten and first grade, and they were retained in grade and referred for special education less frequently – even in school districts with much higher grade retention and special education rates.[11]
- Children with quality pre-K experiences enter kindergarten with better reading, language, math, cognitive, and social skills than those without pre-K.[12]
- Quality pre-K experiences lead to better test scores and improved odds of high school graduation.[13]
- Young children with enriching early environments including quality pre-K programs are less likely to become delinquent as teens.[14]
- Quality pre-K programs also help children mature into responsible citizens – likelier to be married with higher educational attainments and better-paying jobs.[15]

Characteristics of effective pre-K programs include:[16]

- ☐ Well-educated staff with early childhood training and adequate compensation.
- ☐ Low staff turnover.
- ☐ Small group sizes and low child-staff ratios.
- ☐ Availability of comprehensive educational and social services.
- ☐ Sufficient time and intensity of programming.
- ☐ Supportive staff supervision.
- ☐ Parental involvement.
- ☐ Systematic monitoring of children's progress.
- ☐ Program alignment with K-12 curriculum.[17]
- ☐ Community linkages.[18]

Pennsylvania is one of nine states that fail to invest in Head Start or pre-K. The states that do invest are concerned about quality as well as finance. Twenty states and the District of Columbia require pre-K teachers to have bachelor's degrees, and 27 have adopted or are developing curriculum standards.[19] New York, Georgia, and Oklahoma are moving toward universal state-financed prekindergarten for all 4-year-olds whose parents want it, while New Jersey, Connecticut, Massachusetts, Kentucky, and Texas are implementing large-scale pre-K programs targeted at low-income children.[20]

Prekindergarten in Pennsylvania

- ☐ Pennsylvania is one of nine states that fail to invest in prekindergarten.
- ☐ About 29,000 4- and 5-year-olds participate in the federally funded Head Start, but available funding supports only half the children who are eligible each year.
- ☐ Another 32,000 children attend private, tuition-charging nursery schools that are licensed by the Pennsylvania Department of Education or accredited by the National Association for the Education of Young Children. About 2,550 more children attend kindergarten classes for 4-year-olds, generally known as K-4, operated by 35 school districts.
- ☐ Even if all the children in Head Start, private nursery schools, and K-4 were attending quality programs, which is very unlikely, they comprise only 55 percent of the state's 115,000 5-year-old kindergartners.[21]

Full-day Kindergarten: Effective Practices

Children who attend kindergarten – whether full-day or part-day classes – enter first grade with better reading and math skills.[22] But full-day kindergarten is more beneficial, particularly for low-income children in high-poverty communities.[23] In a range of studies, children in full-day kindergarten demonstrate higher academic achievement than those in half-day programs.[24] In Philadelphia, students in full-day programs are 26 percent more likely to be on grade level by third grade, and, through third grade, they demonstrate significantly higher reading, math, and science achievement test results and better grades and attendance.[25] Benefits of full-day kindergarten include:

- Better scores on first grade reading readiness tests, reading tests in the early elementary grades, and achievement tests in later grades.[26]
- Better report cards, fewer grade retentions, less remedial education, and fewer special education placements.[27]
- More time for individual attention, formal instruction, and reinforcement of children's positive behavior, and greater likelihood of spotting learning problems quickly.[28]
- Better student behavior.[29]
- Fewer disruptions and transitions in a child's day.[30]
- Greater creativity and cooperativeness, more involvement in classroom activity, and more independent learning.[31]
- Better nutrition.[32]

Pennsylvania is one of 14 states that do not require school districts to offer kindergarten, although all districts do. The other 36 states require kindergarten to be offered, and 11 require kindergarten attendance by all 5-year-olds.[33] Fourteen states also require that districts offer full-day kindergarten.[34] Nationwide, about 55 percent of all kindergartners attend full-day classes, compared with 31 percent in Pennsylvania.[35]

Foundation for school success: A learning continuum of prekindergarten, full-day kindergarten, and small class sizes in the early grades.

Kindergarten in Pennsylvania

- ☐ While state law does not mandate kindergarten, every school district offers it, typically to 5-year-olds. Districts may also offer kindergarten – without additional funding – to 4-year-olds, but out of Pennsylvania's 153,000 4-year-old children, only 2,550 are enrolled.
- ☐ Most districts offer only half-day programs, and only 31 percent of kindergartners attend full-day classes, compared with 55 percent nationally. Of the state's 501 districts, 218 offer full-day classes to some of their students. Of these, 102 have universal full-day kindergarten, and another 20 offer full-day classes to at least half their students.
- ☐ In the 50 districts with the highest concentrations of children eligible for free or reduced-price lunch, 73 percent of kindergartners attend full-day classes, compared with 31 percent statewide.[36] Still, more than one-quarter of kindergartners in the highest-poverty districts receive only a half day of instruction.
- ☐ During the past decade, the state has been distributing school subsidies as ad hoc annual supplements, rather than using a rational formula. In that time, districts have received no subsidy increases for adding full-day kindergarten.

Small Class Sizes: Effective Practices

Smaller classes in kindergarten through third grade provide greater learning opportunities and lead to significant gains in student achievement, especially for at-risk students. The best evidence comes from Tennessee's Student-Teacher Achievement Ratio (STAR) program, where children in classes of 13 to 17 students from kindergarten through third grade showed:

- Higher standardized achievement scores in every grade and subject.[37]
- Increasingly persistent achievement gains for those who enter small classes early, in kindergarten or first grade, and remain in small classes for three or four years.[38]
- Greatest achievement gains by low-income, minority, and urban students, closing the achievement gap between themselves and their more advantaged peers.[39]
- Persistent evidence of the achievement gains even through ninth grade.[40]
- Fewer special education referrals, disciplinary referrals, and grade retentions, as well as better high school graduation rates.[41]

Wisconsin's Student Achievement Guarantee in Education program offered school districts incentives to reduce class size to 15 students in kindergarten through third grade, and results also point to improved academic achievement, fewer discipline problems, more time for instruction and in-depth study of material, and increased parent satisfaction.[42]

California's class-size reduction initiative is the nation's largest – an effort to reduce all kindergarten through third grade classes to no more than 20 children. While initial results show some modest achievement gains, the state's $1.6 billion-per-year plan also generated some unintended consequences – and provided "a near-textbook case of how not to reduce class size."[43] Wealthier districts initially received more state funds than poorer districts, and suburban districts used their funds to hire the best elementary teachers from neighboring urban districts. As a result, urban students – who generally benefit most from class-size reduction – now have teachers with less experience and training.[44]

Small Classes in Pennsylvania

- The Department of Education collects the number of classes in various class size ranges, beginning with 20 or fewer students – despite research showing the value of class sizes of 17 and below. Data reports from the past two years show serious discrepancies, inaccuracies, and missing data.
- About 29 percent of elementary students statewide are in classes of 20 or fewer students, but in the 50 highest-poverty districts, only 23 percent are in small classes.
- Children in very large classes comprise the other side of the equation. Statewide, 6.5 percent of elementary students are in classes of 30 or more, but the rate is 20 percent in the 50 highest-poverty districts.[47]

Consensus is growing about the best ways to implement class-size reduction initiatives:[45]

- Reduce the actual number of students in a class, not just the overall ratio of students to teachers.
- Start early, preferably in kindergarten, and maintain small classes for at least three years.
- Start with a small initiative and scale up.
- Implement first in high-poverty and minority schools.
- Give schools flexibility in implementation, without absolute caps on the size of every class.
- While there is disagreement about an optimum class size, "the greater the class size beyond 17, the less the likelihood that the outcomes will be positive."[46]
- Maintain training and experience standards for additional teachers and provide professional development to enhance teaching of smaller groups of children.
- Attend to the need for additional facilities.

Unlike 20 other states, Pennsylvania has no state policy regarding class size.

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children Policy Recommendations

Education Finance

Only two states have more inequitable education finance systems than Pennsylvania's.[48] The quality of education should not rely on the wealth of the community where a child lives, but local wealth is the major determinant of quality because the state contributes only about 37 percent of K-12 revenues.[49]

By reforming the state's public education funding system and assuming a larger share of funding – at least 50 percent – the state can reduce the gap between high- and low-spending districts and decrease the over-reliance on the property tax. This also will direct increased resources and learning opportunities to children in the most hard-pressed districts.

The best policies:

- Ensure adequate funding for all students.
- Reduce the gap between high- and low-spending districts.
- Provide more state support for districts with fewer local resources.
- Reduce property taxes while still allowing low-spending districts to increase overall spending.

Prekindergarten

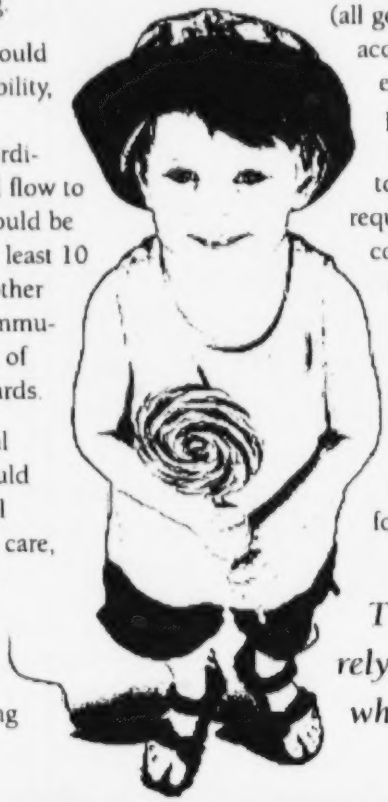
Pennsylvania should establish universal access to voluntary prekindergarten for all 4-year-olds, phased in over several years. Initially, state funds should establish a state-level infrastructure and support pre-K programs in communities with the highest concentrations of low-income children. Driving principles assuring the effort's success include:

- Parents are the first and most important teachers of their young children and should be able to make informed choices among high-quality services in their communities, so it is important to support services in a wide array of settings. Parents must be able to choose whether and where their young children are served. Pre-K services must include more than just the education of children and should provide for parent involvement and education, plus children's access to health care. Since the parents of most 4-year-olds work outside the home, pre-K services must recognize the needs of those families and offer a minimum of disruptions for children and parents. To this end, education programs that operate on a school-day, school-year basis (every day for 180 days) should be linked to other care services before and after school and when school is not in session.
- A key to quality pre-K education is highly competent professionals who are compensated appropriately and receive professional development. State funds should support only those programs in which teachers have bachelor's degrees with early childhood certification, bachelor's degrees in early childhood or child development, bachelor's degrees with coursework concentrations in early childhood and child development, or elementary education certification with coursework concentrations in early childhood and child development. Programs should have a three-year phase-in period during which all teachers must attain one of those credentials.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Prekindergarten continued

- A state-funded initiative should be housed in the Pennsylvania Department of Education and should be overseen by a newly established Bureau of Prekindergarten Education that reports to the Deputy Secretary for Elementary and Secondary Education. The State Board of Education should establish program standards to determine eligibility for state funding.
- Locally, school districts should have governance responsibility, using a model of local or regional planning and coordination. State funds should flow to school districts, which should be required to subcontract at least 10 percent of state funds to other pre-K providers in the community that meet State Board of Education program standards.
- In each community, a local pre-K planning panel should include consumers, school officials, Head Start, child care, and other providers, early childhood professionals, businesses, and civic, philanthropic, and religious leaders. The planning panel should conduct a community needs and resources assessment, survey local providers, facilitate communications among providers, develop plans for kindergarten transition, and advise the school district on the use of state funds.



Annually, the state should pay each eligible school district the statewide per-pupil current expenditures (all general fund spending except for facilities acquisition and debt service) for each child enrolled in a school-day, school-year pre-K program. Beginning in year six, a local share ranging from 5 percent for the poorest districts to 70 percent for the wealthiest should be required. All 4-year-olds living in eligible districts could enroll. Districts should not be mandated to offer pre-K, although the local pre-K planning panel could suggest other community providers. When fully implemented statewide, the program would cost $810 million annually in state and local dollars. PPC proposes an eight-year phase-in, with districts' eligibility hinging on the percentage of children eligible for free and reduced-price school lunches.

The quality of education should not rely on the wealth of the community where a child lives.

Prekindergarten Phase-in Schedule

Year	Subsidized Lunch % Greater than	Added Districts	Total Districts	Added Children	Total Children	Total State Cost ($)	Total Local Cost ($)
1	50%	42	42	23,339	23,339	182,859,498	0
2	40%	50	92	7,571	30,910	242,176,716	0
3	35%	48	140	6,251	37,161	291,149,384	0
4	30%	65	205	9,050	46,211	362,059,268	0
5	20%	101	306	14,879	61,090	478,634,666	0
6	15%	60	366	11,673	72,763	527,506,759	42,585,862
7	10%	57	423	12,170	84,933	598,942,909	66,500,094
8	10% or less	78	501	18,500	103,433	684,551,201	125,842,437

Full-day Kindergarten

Most recent proposals to revise education finance begin with a new state formula that includes a foundation amount per student multiplied by the number of students – the average daily membership, or ADM – and the district's aid ratio, which is a measure of local wealth that assigns higher numbers to poorer districts. While elements vary among the proposals, this basic calculation is common to all.

PPC recommends that in adopting a new formula, the governor and the General Assembly count each full-day kindergarten student as 1.0 ADM and each half-day kindergarten student as 0.5 ADM.

Small Class Sizes

The state should help high-poverty districts, where more than 40 percent of students qualify for subsidized lunches, voluntarily reduce class sizes in kindergarten through third grade, giving school districts the flexibility to reach a per-class average of 17 students. However, districts should be required to assure that schools with the highest concentrations of low-income students have the smallest class sizes. Participating districts also should train teachers in using effective small-class teaching strategies. If all 91 eligible districts were to reduce class size in kindergarten through third grade to an average of 17 students per class, they would need about 2,600 additional teachers. For every class an eligible district adds, the state should pay the district's average teacher's salary, multiplied by its aid ratio. The total cost is $88.366 million and should be phased in one grade per year for four years.

Facilities

Most districts cannot implement pre-K, switch to full-day kindergarten, and reduce elementary school class size without additional facilities. The maximum state reimbursement per pupil for an elementary school construction project has not risen in nearly 19 years and is now $3,900.[30] In adopting these recommendations, the governor and General Assembly should also give the state a greater share of school construction costs. In addition to increasing the per-pupil amounts, the state should consider using its considerable bonding authority to float a major bond issue to support facilities expansions statewide.

The Imperative: Build a Basis for School Success

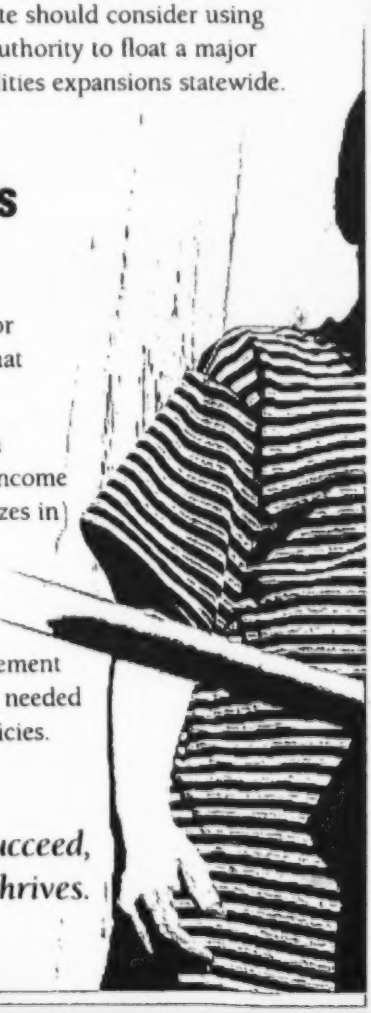
The time has come

Pennsylvania policies should help all children, particularly those most at risk of school failure, become academically proficient. The future of the state and its people depend on their success. Federal law requires their success. They need a fair chance to achieve success.

Pennsylvania should shed its national ranking of 48th in school finance equity and give up its status as one of nine states not funding prekindergarten.

It is time for the governor and General Assembly to:

- Adopt an adequate and equitable school finance system that increases the state share of funding, reduces spending inequities, and reduces reliance on local property taxes.
- Enact a universal prekindergarten program, beginning in districts with the highest concentrations of low-income children.
- Provide state funding for full-day kindergarten that recognizes its costs.
- Help districts with high concentrations of low-income children reduce class sizes in kindergarten through third grade to an average of 17 students.
- Increase state reimbursement for school construction needed to implement these policies.



When its children succeed, Pennsylvania thrives.

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children Board of Directors

Margaret S. Bearn, *Attorney*

Richard D. Birns, Esq.

L. Jack Bradt, *Founder,*
SI Handling Systems

Michael J. Breslin,
Senior Vice President for Children's Services,
Northwestern Human Services of PA

Peter P. Brubaker, *President & CEO,*
Susquehanna Media Co.

Edward Donley, *Former Chairman,*
Air Products & Chemicals, Inc.

Lucy D. Hackney, Esq., *Chair of the Board,*
Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children

Robert Haigh, *President,*
Lancaster Osteopathic Health Foundation

Catherine Harvey, M.S.W., *Vice President,*
Instructional Design, RISE Learning Solutions

Martha W. Isler,
Early Childhood Education Consultant

Thomas Lamb, Jr., *Senior Vice President,*
PNC Financial Services Group

Thomas W. Langfitt, M.D.,
Senior Fellow, Management Division,
Wharton School, University of Pennsylvania

Dorrie M. Leader, *Community Volunteer*

Jacquelynn Puriefoy-Brinkley, *President,*
Educating Children for Parenting

Richard Reynolds, *President,*
Reynolds Construction Management, Inc.

Marty Starling, *Chair,*
Centre County Community Foundation

Heidi L. Willis, *CEO/President,*
Capitol Media, Inc

Ex-Officio:
Joan L. Benso, *President and CEO,*
Pennsylvania Partnerships
for Children

Appendix: Sources of Data

Throughout this report, PPC used the most current data available from the Pennsylvania Department of Education. These included:

- Eligibility for subsidized school lunches for 2001-02.
- State PSSA test data for 2001-02.
- School finance data (expenditures, aid ratios, average daily membership) for 2000-01.
- Enrollment data (for kindergarten and grades 1-3) for 2001-02.
- Class size data from PDE's school profiles for 2000-01 and 1999-2000. See detailed explanation below.

To develop a class size database, PPC began with PDE's school-by-school class size data spreadsheet for 2000-01 (the most current data) available at http://www.paprofiles.org/pa0001/datafiles/MSExcel/S02.xls. PPC removed from the database any school that did not report some enrollment in at least one of the following grades: kindergarten, grade 1, grade 2, grade 3, and grade 4. This resulted in 1,941 elementary schools. However, there was no class size data reported for 253 of those schools, which were then removed from the database. Of the 253, class size data were reported in 1999-2000 for 167, so PPC used the 1999-2000 data for those schools, resulting in a revised database of 1,855 of 1,941 elementary schools. However, seven districts (including four high-poverty districts – Wilkinsburg (Allegheny County), Blacklick Valley (Cambria County), Laurel Highlands (Fayette County), and Galeton (Potter County) – have no class size data for any of their elementary schools. Several other districts are missing data for some elementary schools. PPC summed the number of classes in each of PDE's class size ranges (up to 20 students, 21-23 students, 24-26 students, 27-29 students, 30 or more students) for all reporting elementary schools to arrive at district totals. PPC then made assumptions about the average number of students per class in each of the ranges:

- Up to 20 = 18
- 21-23 = 22
- 24-26 = 25
- 27-29 = 28
- 30 or more = 32

PPC then multiplied the number of classes reported in each range by the presumed average class size for that range to determine an estimated number of children in classes in each range and further calculated the percentage of children in classes in each range. Those percentages were then multiplied by the districts' actual 2001-02 enrollment in kindergarten through third grade to determine the number of children in grades K-3 in each class size range. That enrollment by class size range was then divided by the estimated average class size in the range (18, 22, 25, 28, or 32) to estimate the current number of classes. The K-3 enrollment was then divided by 17 (the reduced class size target) to determine the target number of classes, from which the estimated current number of K-3 classes was subtracted to determine the number of additional classes a district would need to add to have an average K-3 class size of 17 students. PPC cannot vouch for the accuracy of the data reported by districts and posted on PDE's Web site; in some cases it is clear that there are inaccuracies.

Notes

[1] *Pennsylvania Department of Education. PSSA Performance Levels for Math, Reading and Writing. 2002.*

[2] *Pennsylvania Department of Education. Summary of 2002 Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA) Reading, Mathematics and Writing School-by-School Scaled Scores. 2002.*

[3] *PPC calculations based upon PDE reports of 2002 PSSA results.*

[4] *Standard and Poor's School Evaluation Services. Statewide Insights. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania: Phase II Study Period: School Years Ending 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000. 2002.*

[5] *PPC calculations based upon PDE data on 2001-02 enrollments by race and federal school lunch eligibility.*

[6] *National Research Council. From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development. 2000.*

[7] *Groark, Mehaffie, McCall, and Greenberg. "From Science to Policy: Research on Issues, Programs and Policies in Early Care and Education," Early Care and Education: The Keystone of Pennsylvania's Future. 2002.*

[8] *Nagy and Herman. Limitations of Vocabulary Instruction. 1984.*

[9] *Kagan and Cohen. Not by Chance: Creating an Early Care and Education System for America's Children. 1997.*

[10] *Pennsylvania Head Start Association. 2001-2002 Pennsylvania Head Start Outcomes Report. 2002.*

[11] *UCLID Center. Evaluation of Allegheny County Early Childhood Initiative. 2002.*

[12] *Peisner-Feinberg, Burchinal, Clifford, Culkin, Howes, Kagan, Yazejian, Byler, Rustici, and Zelazo. The Children of the Cost, Quality, and Outcomes Study Go to School. 2000.*

[13] *National Research Council. Op. cit.*

[14] *Reynolds. "Study of the Chicago Child-Parent Centers," Journal of the American Medical Association. 2001.*

[15] *University of North Carolina. Early Learning, Later Success: The Abecedarian Study. 1999.*

[16] *Groark et al. Op. cit.*

[17] *Education Commission of the States. Early Learning Shows Benefits. 2001.*

[18] *Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children. From Building Blocks to Books: Learning from Birth through 8 in Pennsylvania. 2002.*

[19] *Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children. Ibid.*

[20] *Education Week. Building Blocks for Success: State Efforts in Early-Childhood Education. Quality Counts 2002. 2002.*

[21] *Kagan and Cohen. Op. cit.; Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children. Op. cit.*

[22] *West, Denton, and Reaney. The Kindergarten Year: Findings from the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-1999. 2000.*

[23] *Educational Research Service. Effects of Kindergarten Scheduling: A Summary of Research. 1989.*

[24] *Fusaro. "The Effect of Full-Day Kindergarten on Student Achievement: A Meta-Analysis." Child Study Journal. 1997.*

[25] *Weiss. Enhancing Urban Children's Early Success in School: The Power of Full-Day Kindergarten. 2002.*

[26] *Ohio Legislative Office of Education Oversight. An Overview of Full-Day Kindergarten. 1997.*

[27] *National Association of School Psychologists. Full Versus Half-Day Kindergarten Programs: A Brief History and Synopsis. 1997.*

[28] *Ibid.*

[29] *Hough and Bride. The Effects of Full-Day Kindergarten on Student Achievement and Affect. 1996.*

[30] *Housden and Kam. Full-Day Kindergarten: A Summary of the Research. 1992.*

[31] *Cryan, Sheehan, Weichel, and Bandy-Hedden. "Success Outcomes of Full-Day Kindergarten: More Positive Behavior and Increased Achievement in the Years After." Early Childhood Research Quarterly 7. 1992.*

[32] *National Association of School Psychologists. Op. cit.*

[33] *Education Commission of the States. ECS State Notes: Kindergarten. 2000.*

[34] *Vecchiotti. Kindergarten: The Overlooked School Year. 2001.*

[35] *West, Denton, and Reaney. Op. cit.*

[36] *PPC calculations based upon PDE data on 2001-02 enrollments by grade and federal school lunch eligibility.*

[37] *Finn, Gerber, Achilles, Boyd-Zaharias. "The Enduring Effects of Small Classes," Teachers College Record. 2001.*

[38] *Ibid.*

[39] *Ibid.*

[40] *Nye, Hedges, and Konstantopoulos. "The Long-Term Effects of Small Classes in Early Grades," The Journal of Experimental Education. 2001.*

[41] *Finn and Achilles. Tennessee's Class-Size Study: Questions Answered, Questions Posed. 1998.*

[42] *Halbach, Ehrle, Zahorick, and Molnar. "Class Size Reduction: From Promise to Practice," Educational Leadership. 2001.*

[43] *Biddle and Berliner. What Research Says About Small Classes and Their Effects." 2002.*

[44] *Steicher, Bohrnstedt, Kirst, McRobbie, and Williams. "Class Size Reduction in California: A Story of Hope, Promise, and Unintended Consequences," Phi Delta Kappan. 2001.*

[45] *Egelson, Harman, Hood, and Achilles. How Class Size Makes a Difference. 2002. McRobbie, Finn, and Harman. Class Size Reduction: Lessons Learned from Experience. 1998.*

[46] *McRobbie et al. Ibid.*

[47] *PPC calculations based upon PDE data on class size (see appendix) and 2001-02 federal school lunch eligibility.*

[48] *Education Week. "If I Can't Learn from You . . . Ensuring a Highly Qualified Teacher in Every Classroom." Education Week 2003. 2003.*

[49] *The Education Policy and Leadership Center. Pennsylvania School Finance Primer. 2002.*

[50] *Ibid.*

Every Child, Every School: Success from the Start

Opportunities and Imperatives

Opportunities abound to position every Pennsylvania schoolchild for learning success. In *Every Child, Every School: Success from the Start*, Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children recommends the policy basis for school success, starting with preschoolers and in school districts with the highest concentrations of low-income children – where barriers to success are highest.

Excerpts:

"State test results make clear that school districts with high concentrations of low-income children tend to have lower achievement than districts with fewer low-income students. But almost every district has some students who are not achieving well enough."

"Three programs, implemented effectively and in a continuum, can ensure even the least advantaged 4-year-old a chance to catch up and succeed in school by age 8: high-quality prekindergarten; full-day, developmentally appropriate kindergarten; and small class sizes in the early grades."

"Pennsylvania policies should help all children, particularly those most at risk of school failure, become academically proficient. The future of the state and its people depend on their success. Federal law requires their success. They need a fair chance to achieve success."

Every Child, Every School: Success from the Start is published by Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children.

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children is a strong, effective, and trusted voice for improving the health, early education, and well-being of the Commonwealth's children.

Joan L. Benso,
President and CEO

PPC conducts its work by:

- ☐ Building awareness of children's issues among policymakers.
- ☐ Analyzing children's needs and proposing solutions.
- ☐ Empowering groups and citizens to act on behalf of children.
- ☐ Representing the interests of children in the state's and nation's capitals.

Pennsylvania Partnerships for Children
20 N. Market Square, Suite 300
Harrisburg, PA 17101-1632

717-236-5680
800-257-2030
www.papartnerships.org

A KIDS COUNT and State Fiscal Analysis Initiative report, funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. Additional support from the Howard Heinz Endowment, The Grable Foundation, and the Donley Foundation.

U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
National Library of Education (NLE)
Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC)

NOTICE

Reproduction Basis

[X] This document is covered by a signed "Reproduction Release (Blanket)" form (on file within the ERIC system), encompassing all or classes of documents from its source organization and, therefore, does not require a "Specific Document" Release form.

[ ] This document is Federally-funded, or carries its own permission to reproduce, or is otherwise in the public domain and, therefore, may be reproduced by ERIC without a signed Reproduction Release form (either "Specific Document" or "Blanket").

P2031065